

REMARKS

Claims 2-7 remain pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The information disclosure statement filed on November 5, 2003 allegedly fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(1), which requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office. No 1449 was found in the office records for this Information Disclosure Statement. Applicant intentionally did not file a 1449 with the information disclosure statement.

Instead, Applicant simply alerted the examiner to the presence of co-pending U.S. Application Serial no. 10/631,484 in the body of the information disclosure statement. The information disclosure statement includes section IV entitled "CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION(S)" on page 2. This section states that U.S. Application Serial no. 10/631,484 filed July 31, 2003 may include subject matter that may be related to the present application. A copy of U.S. Application Serial no. 10/631,484 (including drawings) was enclosed with the information disclosure statement.

Applicant respectfully submits that no 1449 is necessary.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Notwithstanding, Applicant amends claim 2 to recite a sub-carriage. As described on page 15, lines 1-4 of Applicant's specification, the sub-carriage 9 is slidable in a vertical direction through a pair of slide rails 33 (See Fig.2). Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Although claim 2 was not rejected on any prior art grounds, Applicant wishes to note that according to the claimed arrangement, when a workpiece has been newly introduced, the workpiece gap is measured by driving the gap measuring means and, based on the result of this measurement, the gap adjusting means is driven. The workpiece gap is thus subjected to fine adjustment by the relative movement in the vertical (up and down) direction between the function liquid droplet ejection head and the workpiece. Since the workpiece gap can thus be automatically adjusted, it is possible to include the workpiece gap adjustment step in the series of workpiece processing steps. The gap adjustment may be performed by vertically moving the function liquid droplet ejection head, by vertically moving the workpiece, and by vertically moving both the function liquid droplet ejection head and the workpiece.

As recited in Claim 2, the function liquid droplet ejection head is mounted on a sub-carriage, and the gap adjusting means comprises: a base which supports the sub-carriage in a manner slidable in a vertical direction; an actuator which is fixed to the base; a male screw member which rotates in one direction and in an opposite direction

by the actuator; and a female screw member which is provided in the carriage so as to engage in a screwed manner with the male screw member.

According to this arrangement, when the screw member is rotated by the actuator in one direction and in the opposite direction, the sub-carriage finely moves in the vertical direction through the female screw member. In other words, by vertically moving the function liquid droplet ejection head by means of the actuator through the sub-carriage, the workpiece gap can be finely adjusted.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lee, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,629,787 B2). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Notwithstanding and solely for the purpose of expediting prosecution, Applicant cancels claim 1. Accordingly, this rejection is moot.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,629,787 B2) in view of Arai, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,949,447). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Notwithstanding and solely for the purpose of expediting prosecution, Applicant cancels claims 8 and 9. Accordingly, this rejection is moot.

Claims 10 – 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee, et al. in view of Sakino, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,984,470). This rejection is

respectfully traversed. Notwithstanding and solely for the purpose of expediting prosecution, Applicant cancels claims 10 – 12. Accordingly, this rejection is moot.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner states that claims 3-7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicant amends claims 3-7 to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, claims 3-7 should now be in condition for allowance.

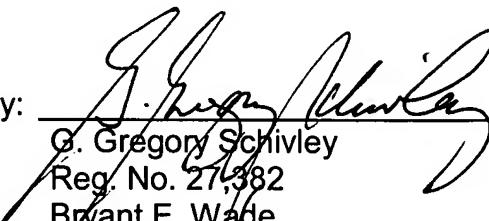
CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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